



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Sue Walitsky, 202-224-4524

December 17, 2010

CARDIN ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT TO CLEAN UP CONTAMINATION AT FORT DETRICK

Senator Pushed all Parties to Finalize a FFA Agreement

WASHINGTON – After months of working with Base Command at Fort Detrick, the Department of Defense, and the Environmental Protection Agency, **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD) announced today that a Federal Facilities Agreement (FFA) to remediate the Superfund sites that are located at Fort Detrick has been signed.

*“Addressing the legacy of chemical contaminants at Fort Detrick is overdue. I am very pleased that a formal agreement dictating the process, scope and responsibilities for permanently cleaning up Area B and the affected areas near Fort Detrick has been reached,” said **Senator Cardin**, who is a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW). “The agreement recognizes EPA’s role as ultimate arbiter of cleanup standards and provides an enforceable framework for the Army to fully evaluate the situation and complete all the remediation work that is necessary at Fort Detrick.”*

In 2008, EPA listed Fort Detrick on the National Priorities List (Superfund), which requires an FFA to be signed, providing a legally binding agreement governing the cleanup. In August 2010, amid growing concerns about the scope of contamination at Area B and the progress towards reaching an FFA, Senator Cardin called on EPA and the Department of Defense to expedite the finalization of the FFA by December 1, 2010, so that real work could get underway to fully address the contamination around Fort Detrick.

Area B is approximately 400 acres of largely undeveloped land located on the northwestern edge of Fort Detrick, which historically has been used for waste disposal by Fort Detrick. Work to remove contaminants and cap landfill sites in Area B was underway before the site’s listing on the National Priorities List. However, groundwater contamination caused by the presence of tetrachloroethylene (TCE) and perchloroethylene (PCE) continue to be a concern. Today’s ratification of the FFA provides assurances that the full scope of work needed to remediate the affected area will be done.

On September 3, 2008, EPA placed Fort Detrick Area B on the Superfund National Priority List (NPL) for groundwater contamination. The NPL is a national list of sites where hazardous contaminants could impact public health and/or the environment. NPL sites undergo a thorough investigation to determine the full nature and extent of contamination. EPA or the parties responsible for the contamination then address whatever risks the sites pose to human health and the environment.

At Senator Cardin's request, on September 18, 2008, the Environment and Public Works Committee held an oversight hearing on cleanups at federal facilities under the Superfund law. At the hearing, Senator Cardin pressed the Department of Defense to address the cleanup of military installations in Maryland and to agree to EPA oversight.

*"The contamination of groundwater at Area-B is the dangerous legacy of the application and disposal of chemical agents decades before we understood the harmful effects that these chemicals have on human health and the environment. This agreement ensures that the Department of Defense will work with EPA to fully investigate and remediate the contaminated site," said **Senator Cardin**, who also chairs EPW's Water and Wildlife Subcommittee. "It represents a clear commitment by all parties to ensure the health and safety of Fort Detrick and the surrounding community."*

###